

**In The Claims:**

Claims 1 – 14 have been cancelled.

15. (Amended) A protective sport helmet, comprising:

a hard shell portion for covering and providing protection to a wearer's head;

a lining secured to an inner side of said shell portion;

a chin strap having a first end secured to a first side of said hard shell portion and a second end secured to a second side of said hard shell portion, said chin strap including a portion for engaging said wearer's chin;

a facemask portion attached to at least one point on said hard shell portion, said facemask portion having a plurality of horizontal bars and a plurality of vertical bars, which together form a cage to protect said wearer's face;

a generally solid plastic mouthpiece connected to at least one of said plurality of horizontal bars of said facemask portion; and

a plurality of openings formed in said generally solid plastic mouthpiece [facemask portion] to allow air to flow therethrough for purposes of ventilation.

16. (Original) The helmet of claim 15, wherein said mouthpiece is connected adjacent a bottom portion of said facemask portion.

17. (Original) The helmet of claim 15, wherein each of said plurality of openings has a larger height than width.

18. (Amended) The helmet of claim 15, wherein each of said plurality of openings [are] is oriented generally diagonally.

19. (Amended) A protective sport helmet, comprising:

a shell portion;

a facemask in communication with said shell portion, said facemask having a plurality of horizontal bars and a plurality of vertical bars, which together form a cage;

a visor secured to said shell portion and overlying an upper portion of said facemask;

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a chin strap in communication with said shell portion, said chin strap having a portion for engaging a wearer's chin;

a generally solid plastic mouthpiece secured to at least one of said plurality of horizontal bars of said facemask; and

a plurality of vent openings formed in said generally solid mouthpiece.

20. (Original) The helmet of claim 19, wherein said mouthpiece is connected to said facemask adjacent a bottom portion.

21. (Original) The helmet of claim 19, wherein said chin strap has a first end engageable with a first side of said facemask and a second end engageable with a second side of said facemask.

22. (Original) The helmet of claim 19, wherein said plurality of openings are oriented in a generally diagonal direction.

23. (Amended) A protective sports helmet, comprising:

a hard shell portion for receiving and protecting a wearer's head;

a lining secured to a substantial portion of an inner side of said hard shell portion;

a chin strap being releaseably engageable with said hard shell portion;

a facemask portion secured and attached to said hard shell portion, said facemask portion having a plurality of generally horizontal and vertical bars;

a generally solid mouthpiece secured to said facemask portion; and

at least one vent opening formed in said mouthpiece; said at least one vent opening being oriented generally diagonally.

24. (Original) The helmet of claim 23, wherein said mouthpiece is formed of a hard plastic material.

25. (Original) The helmet of claim 23, wherein said at least one vent opening is formed adjacent a front portion of said mouthpiece.

26. (Amended) A protective sports helmet, comprising:

a hard plastic shell;

a visor secured to said hard plastic shell [portion];

a facemask in communication with said shell portion and intended to protect a wearer's face, said facemask having a plurality of generally horizontal and vertical bars;  
a chin strap having a first end secured to a first side of said plastic shell and a second end secured to a second side of said plastic shell, said chin strap including a portion for engaging a wearer's chin;

a lining secured to an inner side of said hard plastic shell; and  
at least three ear holes formed in at least one side of the helmet;  
whereby a front edge of said visor extends over at least a portion of said facemask to assist in blocking out glare.

27. (Original) The helmet of claim 26, wherein said at least three ear holes are oriented generally parallel to each other.

28. (Original) The helmet of claim 26, wherein said at least three ear holes have a longer length than height.

29. (Amended) A protective sports helmet, comprising:  
a shell portion;  
a facemask secured to said shell portion;  
a visor portion secured to said facemask and extending over at least a portion of said facemask;

a chin strap releaseably engageable with said shell portion;  
a plurality of ear holes formed in said shell portion; and  
a lining secured to an inner side of said shell portion; said lining having a first portion that is releaseably engageable with said inner side to allow a wearer to achieve a better fit, said lining having a second portion that is not in releasable engagement with said inner side.

30. (Original) The helmet of claim 29, wherein said first portion of said lining generally corresponds to a crown portion of a head of said wearer.

31. (Original) The helmet of claim 29, wherein said first portion of said lining is releaseably engageable with said shell portion by hook and loop attachment.

32. (Amended) The helmet of claim 29, wherein [said lining includes a second portion that is disposed beneath said first portion;] said second portion [wrapping] wraps around at least a portion of a lower edge of said shell portion to provide protection to the base of a wearer's neck.

33. (New) The helmet of claim 23, further comprising:  
a plurality of vent openings formed in said mouthpiece.

34. (New) The helmet of claim 33, wherein each of said plurality of vent openings is oriented generally diagonally.

35. (New) The helmet of claim 26, wherein three ear holes are formed in at least one side of the helmet and wherein said three ear holes are disposed one on top of the other and wherein a middle ear hole is larger than a lower ear hole and an upper ear hole between which said middle ear hole is disposed.

36. (New) A protective sports helmet, comprising:

a hard shell portion for covering and providing protection to a wearer's head;

a lining secured to an inner side of said shell portion;

a chin strap having a first end releasably engageable with one side of said hard shell portion and a second end releasably engageable with the other side of said hard shell portion, said chin strap including a portion for engaging a wearer's chin;

a facemask portion having a plurality of horizontal and vertical bars, said facemask portion attached to at least one point on said hard shell portion;

a generally solid mouthpiece connected to said facemask portion, said generally solid mouthpiece having at least one opening formed therein; and

at least three ear holes formed in each side of the helmet.

37. (New) The helmet of claim 36, wherein said at least three ear holes are oriented generally parallel to one another.

38. (New) The helmet of claim 36, wherein each of said ear holes has a length and a height and wherein said length of each of ear holes is greater than said height.

39. (New) The helmet of claim 36, wherein said mouthpiece is formed of a plastic material.

40. (New) The helmet of claim 36, further comprising:  
a visor which is secured to said shell portion and wherein said visor extends over at least a portion of said facemask portion.
41. (New) The helmet of claim 36, wherein a plurality of openings are formed in said solid mouthpiece.
42. (New) The helmet of claim 41, wherein said plurality of openings are oriented in a generally diagonal direction.
43. (New) The helmet of claim 41, wherein at least one of said plurality of openings is disposed adjacent a front portion of said mouthpiece.
44. (New) A protective sports helmet, comprising:  
a hard plastic shell;  
a visor secured to said hard plastic shell;  
a facemask in communication with said shell portion and intended to protect a wearer's face, said facemask having a plurality of generally horizontal and vertical bars;  
a chin strap having a first end in communication with one side of said plastic shell and a second end in communication with the other side of said plastic shell, said chin strap including a portion for engaging a wearer's chin;  
a plurality of vent openings formed in said hard plastic shell;  
at least three ear holes formed in at least one side of the helmet;  
a generally solid mouthpiece connected to said face mask, said mouthpiece having a front portion that is spaced away from a wearer's chin; and  
a lining secured to an inner side of said hard plastic shell, whereby said lining is secured to substantially the entirety of said inner side except for an area adjacent said ear holes and adjacent said plurality of vent openings.

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